

EXHIBIT J

Scenes from a revolution: Romania after the fall; Essay

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Body

When I hear or read phrases like "failed states," or "nations in transition," I think not of such lifeless abstractions but of the compelling human drama we saw and felt in the streets and squares of **Romania** in the early '90s. Back then, Romanians were digging out from under the rock of a brutal dictatorship that had sapped their lifeblood for decades. Newly liberated, they sought to improve their lives by joining NATO and the European Union.

To many, gaining admittance to those premier western clubs seemed like an impossible dream. The country was a mess, with a full platter of political, military, economic and social problems to confront. Yet somehow, within little more than a decade, **Romania** succeeded. It was an extraordinary national achievement made possible by the courage, determination and resilience of the Romanian people. Their struggle was passionate, exhilarating, rocky, sometimes comic, often confounding and always fascinating. It did not fit neatly into any pat political science category.

The reflections that follow are an effort to capture a bit of the flavor of those early, heady times, when **Romania's** quest was only beginning.

Congratulations--sort of

Our family was in Lisbon in late 1989 when word of our assignment to Bucharest came through, just in time for us to watch on Portuguese television as **Romania** exploded in revolution and the country's longtime dictator, Nicolai Ceausescu, and his wife Elena were executed--on Christmas Day. The usual congratulatory notes about our upcoming move were muted this time, though one from China, where change had just been nipped in the bud in Tiananmen Square, was openly envious.

Scenes from a revolution: Romania after the fall; Essay

After squeezing in a smidgen of Romanian language training, my wife Linda and I landed in Bucharest in the summer of 1990. Our teenage son Andrew stayed back in the United States, since there was no international high school in **Romania**. Over the next three years he joined us for school holidays and summer vacations and soon became something of a celebrity in the capital as "D.J. Grimace," a volunteer deejay offering English-language chatter and the latest pop music on a makeshift radio station. Such unlikely things happened regularly back then.

A capital in turmoil

Bucharest in that era was a dusty, chaotic, downtrodden city consumed by a struggle for political power that justified the Balkan reputation for intrigue and maneuvering. A National Salvation Front had theoretically taken charge, but it had multiple factions, personality clashes and conflicting visions for the way forward. Power was truly up for grabs.

Demonstrators gathered frequently in the central University Square, which they proclaimed a "communist-free zone." Not only students came there to protest. Jiu Valley coal miners also favored this ground, which was two blocks from our house, a grand old villa in the center of the city. Once, when the miners decamped after a fruitless siege, scores of weary and dispirited men marched silently down our side street before dawn, guided only by their tiny head lanterns. The scene conjured up images of the "thousand points of light" that President George H. W. Bush had evoked, in another world.

The day before the miners left town, I'd walked among them with our golden retriever, Brava; they'd never seen a dog like her, and were moved enough by her beauty ("Frumoasa!") to share some of their meager bread rations. She was shameless enough to accept, too.

There was not a lot of food or anything else to go around in those days. Store shelves were empty. One day, noting an international news report that **Romania** was running out of light bulbs, I asked our domestic helper whether it was true that **Romania** lacked light bulbs. "No," she said, "we have one." She and her husband unscrewed it and moved it from room to room, as needed. The bulk of the country's bulb production was sent abroad--for dollars, pounds and deutschmarks.

Restaurants had little to offer, and what was available was rarely appealing and not always healthy. (When the occasional U.S. military support flight came in, Embassy families would pitch in to unload the plane before drawing lots for such luxuries as grapes and bananas).

Ceausescu's legacy

The country was down on its heels. The capital itself was gray, unpainted, unkempt. Streets, even sidewalks, were scarred with potholes. Once charming old buildings were falling apart; others had been razed in Ceausescu's mad drive to top North Korea's megalomania with a gigantic building of his own. His "house of the people" included seven separate offices just for the glorious leader and his various official titles; each of his suites was several times bigger than the living space socialist planners allotted for families in the poured concrete apartment building that defaced a once beautiful city. (One was observed that instead of "little Paris," contemporary Bucharest might better be called, "big Tirana.")

The national currency, the leu, was nearly worthless. To buy anything of value you needed dollars or deutschmarks. Either those or Kent 100 Gold cigarettes, which had become the de facto currency used to get garbage collected, a bandage changed at a hospital, or any other basic service performed. The Kent

Scenes from a revolution: Romania after the fall; Essay

economy was so established and pervasive that Saul Bellow incorporated it in "The Dean's December," his novel set partly in Bucharest.

Orphanages spilled over with unwanted children, many plagued with AIDS or other serious medical ailments due to the re-use of syringes and the generally shoddy health conditions. Ceausescu demanded more and more Romanians, without considering whether parents could or would take care of the children he said the state required.

This was the socialist paradise Nicolai Ceausescu--"the genius of the Carpathians," as one court poet dubbed him without apparent irony--bequeathed to his countrymen.

Now what?

No wonder that the execution of the dictator and his wife brought euphoria to long-suffering Romanians. The natural elation proved predictably hard to sustain. In the bright light of the morning after, it was all too clear that the horrors Ceausescu had left could not be quickly swept away. The physical and psychological damage was searing and widespread. There could be no instant deliverance, despite the promises of politicians new and old and the high expectations of an oppressed populace.

Would-be leaders abounded. Pre-communist political parties came back to life, and tens of new ones appeared as well, all offering solutions they could not deliver when given the chance. A series of revolving door coalitions gave governing a shot but inevitably came up short. None could magically cure the nation's ills, which included poverty, disease, corruption, mistrust, and ethnic tensions. Communist misrule had not created any of those conditions, but it had made most of them worse. Frustration that the overthrow of the hated regime did not immediately reverse the decline led to frequent reshuffling of the deck.

The post-revolution jockeying for political power was literally a royal free for all, since the pretenders included ex-King Michael, who'd been living quietly in Switzerland for more than four decades, sometimes working as a commercial pilot, before returning to Romania to test whether monarchist sentiment was strong enough to put him back on the throne. It wasn't.

The compromise candidate who emerged for an extended time in the sun was Ion Iliescu, a former lieutenant to Ceausescu who claimed to have been a reformer all along. While he served as president (and head of state) under the new constitution in the first half of the '90s, protest signs shouting "Jos (down with) Iliescu" were so ubiquitous that observers could be forgiven for thinking "Jos" was his first name. (Another one-time presidential candidate, with the imposing name, "Caius Dragomir," stopped by our house regularly to drink gin and tonic and talk politics. After finishing in the middle of the ranks, he was sent to Paris as ambassador.)

Outright nostalgia for Ceausescu himself was a part of the mix, too. Flowers appeared periodically at what was believed to be Ceausescu's burial site, demonstrating once again how quickly we forget. It's as if Shakespeare's Marc Antony had it all wrong: the good that men do lives after them, the evil is oft interred with their bones....

The good that some Romanians looked back longingly upon were the secure jobs and free health care of the communist/socialist period. Most citizens remembered instead that the jobs paid little, health care was horrific, freedoms scarce and the secret police everywhere.

The human spirit

At the Anglican church in central Bucharest one Sunday morning, friends pointed out a Romanian man there with his family. He was a brilliant mathematician, it was said, whose career had been stymied when he refused to swear allegiance to the communist party; his wife and children paid a cost, too, with poor housing and schools, yet by all appearances they were proud of their chosen course and hopeful for the future.

Other fleeting images come to mind: Dirt poor Gypsy (Roma) women and children begging outside train stations and underpasses; an elderly academic, surrounded by books in his inherited apartment, trying to maintain a civilized veneer despite the brutality and primitivism he'd lived through; a princess, one of King Michael's daughters, presiding over a small lunch in a modest, borrowed apartment, near the palace where her father had reigned; students full of energy and idealistic zeal, debating excitedly into the night about what should be done; a dissident intellectual reborn as a Foreign Ministry official learning to maneuver through the bureaucracy to establish a U.S.-Romanian Fulbright commission; a long jailed poet re-born as rector of a provincial university and quickly making it one of the most progressive in the country; some 50 American scholars and their families, accustomed to managing with little on the Romanian economy, reveling in the turkey and trimmings at a Thanksgiving dinner in our home.

A Balkan battle for power

Life in all its complexity continued while politicians of all variety waged their prolonged seesaw battle for power and direction. The fundamental question was whether the authoritarian leaders and camp followers of the old regime, who'd reinvented themselves and still held many trump cards, would emerge on top again or would new, more democratic but untested leaders prevail. In the immediate post-revolution years, elections were frequent and inconclusive; no one knew how this drama would ultimately end.

There remained considerable fear (and for some, hope) that the Soviet Union, which did not itself dissolve until two years into the Romanian revolution, would act to reverse it. There was constant tension and sometimes outbreaks of violence between the security forces and ex-communist, born-again reformers and the, mostly young, activists demanding real democracy. During one clash, a wing of government headquarters caught fire, leaving a charred reminder to join the tattered Romanian flag, with the hammer and sickle cut out of its center, as symbols of revolution.

The topsy turvy struggle was similar to what we all witnessed on the streets of Tunis and Cairo during the Arab Spring of 2011. In both cases, the United States wanted to identify with those fighting for a democratic future. Our task was somewhat easier in **Romania**, since we hadn't been so cozy with Ceausescu--despite brief flirtations when he seemed to be tweaking the nose of the Russian bear--as with the long-time authoritarian rulers in places like Cairo under Mubarak and Tehran under the Shah.

No miracle bailout

Romanians told us they'd been waiting for years for the Americans to arrive. Some dared hope for a Marshall Plan type rescue and were disappointed that no such massive effort, no deus ex machina solution, was in the cards. Romanians soon saw that, while American and others would help, they would have to earn their own passage. As they did.

American assistance was clearly focused and left little doubt whose side we were on. Our basic goal in **Romania** was not mysterious: we wanted a democratic outcome. To that end, we helped Romanians

Scenes from a revolution: Romania after the fall; Essay

revive the economy and build democratic institutions, like an independent judiciary, a free press and quality schools. We used our programs and influence to support democratic forces and put a brake on some of the more totalitarian remnants still threatening to dash their hopes.

A few years later, when I'd moved to Warsaw, the new president of **Romania**, Emil Constantinescu -- a former university rector, genuine democrat and long-time friend of the United States -- came through on a state visit. One of his aides recognized me in a receiving line and exclaimed, "We did it! We did it!" His party had defeated Iliescu in the 1996 national election and taken power, peacefully. Romanian democrats knew who their friends were.

Among the darker forces that always had to be taken into account was the former Securitate, the secret police who under Ceausescu had penetrated every nook of society and turned husband against wife, child against parent. Though the organization was theoretically dismantled soon after the revolution, many of its leaders and operatives still lurked menacingly in the background in the early post-revolution years.

One of my unusual tasks in those days was to go periodically to an old Securitate installation on the outskirts of the city to pick up microfiche copies of archives to mail through the APO to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum. Maybe my imagination was over active, but I sensed evil there. **Romania** was being paid in some fashion for turning over these files, but I was not privy to the terms of the transaction. Museum representatives told me, however, that the microfiche were vital to the historical record of the Holocaust in **Romania**.

Fitful start to a market economy

Post revolution **Romania** did not lack for entrepreneurial impulses. The real impediment to jump starting a free market system was not motivation but the threat that the old nomenclatura -- the security forces and the politicians affiliated with them -- would steal the nation's treasure. Shifting from a command to a market economy offered a potential for huge profits, and the people who had been part of the ruling establishment were well positioned to gain from it.

This was not a phenomenon limited to **Romania**; it existed throughout Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union--the whole, crumbling communist world. Billions of dollars were siphoned off during privatization by people who had been in power and knew how to use the advantages they enjoyed, including contacts within the country and outside it. (One of the most notorious of these criminals, Iliya Pavlov of Bulgaria, who'd looted billions from that country's state assets, built a mansion in northern Virginia. He was eventually assassinated by a rival gang.)

Embassy officers did what we could to combat such treachery. As we offered **Romania's** new leaders political and economic support, we conditioned the aid on genuine reforms. One focus was on the question of whether **Romania** would get most favored nation trade treatment. The government wanted that desperately to lift economic prospects, and we used the leverage to insist on regulatory reform, free and fair elections, an independent judiciary, freedom of the press and an end to the state monopoly on broadcasting.

Television, for example, had been an important instrument for running the country. During the revolutionary upheaval of 1989 and 1990, party stalwarts and insurgents fought a pitched battle at RTV headquarters for that vital source of power. TV was a primary vehicle for both information and entertainment. Warsaw Pact regimes were expert on using broadcasting to strengthen their grip on power--

Scenes from a revolution: Romania after the fall; Essay

-until his subjects turned against him and Ceausescu watched in a daze from the balcony of party headquarters as the TV screen went blank.

In my particular part of the embassy, we spent many hours advising and encouraging groups seeking to get independent television off the ground. The challenge was many-sided: money, equipment and people had to be lined up, the law making broadcasting a state monopoly replaced, and barriers to the importing of necessary equipment lifted. Eventually, under the threat of being denied most favored nation status, authorities fighting a rear guard action did what was required, and alternatives to government broadcasters became a reality.

The story was similar with newspapers. One independent newspaper, "**Romania** Libera," was daring in its early challenge to the old school hard-liners but woefully short on resources. Through a foundation set up with U.S. government money, the International Media Fund, we gave them an old printing press and printing supplies and pressed customs officials to ensure the stuff was admitted into the country. The newspaper's technicians soon had the press up and running.

Romanian journalists knew what to do with their new-found freedom, engaging in a feisty debate on the many issues before the nation. Through our United States Information Service (USIS) exchange programs, we offered some of the most promising young people in the media, as well as the law, medicine and other professions, opportunities for study or training at home and abroad. Many of the participants in these exchange programs came back to become editors, reporters, judges, doctors, government officials and scientists who helped lead the drive to reinvent their country. (Elena Ceausescu, whose formal education ended after the fourth grade, had been crowned the country's foremost scientist; she was listed as a co-author of most scientific works. Reviving a scientific world thus humiliated and debased took some time and tremendous resolve, talent and energy.

In another sign of **Romania's** turn away from its authoritarian past, Romanian Ministry of Communication officials agreed to lease time on state transmitters for Voice of America broadcasts into the disintegrating Yugoslavia, a nice bit of jiu jitsu.

We kept a light on for them

During this period we celebrated the twentieth anniversary of the American library in Bucharest. Under an agreement between President Nixon and Ceausescu, **Romania** had been allowed to open a cultural facility in New York and we were able to set up an American library/cultural center in **Romania's** capital.

Romanians pulled many of us aside the night of the anniversary commemoration to tell us how much that library had meant to them during the dark ages. We heard a torrent of unsolicited testimony about how that center kept the lights of freedom and democracy glowing for them. Skeptics about the value of cultural and academic exchanges overlook such direct, personal accounts about how hopes were nurtured, even in closed societies like Ceausescu's **Romania**. Unfortunately, most of our American libraries are closed now, a casualty of misguided budget priorities.

Light was more than a metaphor in early '90s Bucharest. The city was notoriously grim in the final years of Ceausescu and the aftermath of his overthrow. During the 1991 Christmas season, the cosmetics magnate Christine Valmy made herself popular in Bucharest by brightening the city with holiday lights she brought in from New York. Romanians loved the new found glitter, and I've never since taken the festive displays in our American cities for granted.

Scenes from a revolution: Romania after the fall; Essay

Another shining moment for Romanians came in October, 1992, when Michael Jackson, then near the top of his game, performed in Bucharest in a concert later shown on HBO. An overflow crowd in the city's biggest soccer stadium responded with uninhibited enthusiasm, a rare outpouring of pure joy for a populace still contending with hard scrabble living conditions.

Yet another star shooting through the Romanian capital was Sir Ian McKellen, who came to play Richard III on the stage of the National Theatre. Romanians stopped the show with spontaneous applause when the villainous king was slain, the connection to their own recent history obvious to all. When the show ended, theater-goers were obviously still elated as they made their way home through a snowstorm.

One major U.S. initiative in the early post-revolution days was a massive book donation drive. Americans had watched on their television screen as the National Library in Bucharest burned to the ground during the violence of December '89; they responded with a nationwide effort to replace the books that had gone up in flames.

Allen Docal, the director of our cultural center, and his library staff made sure the estimated million volumes got into the right hands. Turning our auditorium over to this campaign for the duration, Allen and his crew sorted the books into categories and identified organizations most likely to put them to good use: libraries and schools, churches, public facilities all around the country. Not every book was an intellectual treasure--a treatise on recipes for making quiche comes to mind--but American generosity unquestionably helped nurture countless Romanian hearts and minds.

Saving the children

Adopting children in **Romania** became such a major phenomenon during this period that both "Sixty Minutes" and "20/20" did feature reports about it and the widespread chicanery that accompanied it. In 1991 Americans adopted more than 2,000 children from **Romania**, more than from any other country that year. Our consular waiting area doubled as a baby changing room for months.

Americans, of course, were responding to the crisis with their hearts, but they sometimes fell into shaky, dubious arrangements. Our consular officers tried to ensure that good intentions did not lead to tragedy; they urged Americans to work with responsible organizations who did due diligence, rather than the fly-by-night operators who proliferated on the streets. For many, parents and children alike, the story ended happily.

A national triumph

Romania realized two central goals when it was admitted into NATO in 2004 and the European Union in 2007. These achievements were not the end of history or a magic cure-all for the nation's problems, which remain plentiful, but they put the country in a far, far better place than it has ever been. Membership represents a huge advance toward greater democracy, security and prosperity for Romanians. Back when they started down this road, anyone betting that they'd be able to earn this new status could have gotten long odds. Other nations facing what seem like formidable challenges today might well take heart: it may not be easy, but it can be done.

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